

**Thomas Johnson to George Washington, May 10, 1772,  
Letters to Washington and Accompanying Papers.  
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**FROM THOMAS JOHNSON, JR.**

ANNAPOLIS 10TH May 1772

SIR

Mr. Tilghman the Speaker of our House of Assembly not being in Town I could not procure a Receipt from him. I send you one from myself for £6. as recd for his Use if that is not sufficient I will get one from himself and inclose it to you: as soon as I have an Opportunity—I inclose you a Receipt from the Clerk of the Upper Ho and another from the Clerk of the Lower House for £3. each I thought there was the like fee to the President of the Upper House as to the Speaker but on Inquiry finding myself mistaken I return you 16 Dollars.

Mr. Ballendine has been here two or three Days but Mr. Mason has not yet come I fear our Governor is still under an Impression that a Concurrence by our Assembly in a Scheme with yours for clearing Potowmack may weaken the proprietary Claim of Jurisdiction over that River and consequently that he is not at Liberty to assent to such Bill tho' I believe in his own Judgment clearing the River is an Object which deserves immediate Attention and that he wishes to see it effected. If the Governr. should be under such Impression and should not write Home to be set more at large or should write unsuccessfully as the delay that might be thereby occasioned would at all Events be highly prejudicial I would submit to your Consideration whether it might not be prudent that a strong Representation should be sent to England, to be made use of in case it should be necessary, to procure

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an Intimation from thence that a Bill ought to pass here: If Instructions ought at all to be sent to Governors as the Rule of their Conduct I have no Idea but that proppr Instructions might properly be superseded by Instructions from the King in Council and if so I cannot apprehend there would be the least Difficulty in obtaining an Order for the passage of a Bill in which the Trade and Subjects are so much interested though it might possibly collaterally affect the prors Claim of Jurisdiction—I shall be glad that our Govrs. Letters to Virginia may evince that my Apprehensions are Groundless but if my Conjectures are well founded I much wish that no Time may be lost.<sup>1</sup>

I am Sir Your most obedient Servant THS. JOHNSON JUNR

<sup>1</sup> The Potomac Company was organized in May, 1762, for the purpose of opening navigation “from Fort Cumberland on Wills Creek, to the Great Falls.” It was a favorite project of Washington's, but was opposed by the Baltimore merchants. The war absorbed all lesser schemes, but in May, 1785, the Company was reorganized, and Washington elected its first president. In 1820, after much fruitless expenditure, the idea was abandoned, and the organization merged into the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Company.